

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/964,898	WATANABE ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Jerome Grant II	2626

-- *The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--*

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to 7-1-2004.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 34-40,44-46,50-58 and 61-64.
3. The drawings filed on 27 September 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 7/11/04, 3-29-04
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.


JEROME GRANT II
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Reasons for Allowance

1.

Claim 34 is allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach or suggest in claimed combination, "... wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to open said protection cover when said detection device detects that said image pickup apparatus is in the exterior connection state."

Claim 35 is allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach or suggest in claimed combination, wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to close said protection cover when said detection device detects that the image pickup apparatus comes out of said exterior connection state.

Claims 36 and 37 are allowed for the reason that the prior art does not teach or suggest in claimed combination, wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to open when on the basis of input of a signal corresponding to starting of the image pickup from said exterior device, said detection device detects that said image pickup apparatus is in the exterior connection state.

Claims 38-40 are allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach or suggest in claimed combination, "wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to close said protection cover when on the basis of input of a signal corresponding to finishing of image pickup from said exterior device, said detection

device detects that said image pickup apparatus comes out of the exterior connection state.

Claim 44 is allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach or suggest in claimed combination, "... wherein said detection device detects said image pickup apparatus is out of the exterior connection state by input of a signal indicating disconnection with said exterior device."

Claim 45 is allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach or suggest in claimed combination, "... wherein said detection device detects said image pickup apparatus is out of said exterior connection state by a signal indicating electrical disconnection with said exterior device."

Claim 46 is allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach in claimed combination, "... wherein said detection device detects said image pickup apparatus is out of the exterior connection state by input of a signal indicating mechanical disconnection with said exterior device."

Claims 50-58 are allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach or suggest in claimed combination, "... said detection device deciding the operation of said protection cover operation device according to the result of the detection."

Claim 61 is allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach a control device communicatively coupled to said protection cover operation device and detecting

device, wherein said control device is arranged to control said protection cover operating device so that when said detecting device detects that said image pickup apparatus is connected to said external apparatus and a signal from said external apparatus is supplied to said image pickup apparatus through the detected connection therebetween, the protection cover is opened in response to the signal supplied from said external apparatus."

Claim 62 is allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach or suggest, "... wherein said detection step causes said operating step to open said protection cover when said image pickup apparatus is in the exterior connection state."

Claim 63 is allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach or suggest in claimed combination, "... wherein said detection step causes said operating step to close said protection cover when the image pickup apparatus comes out of the exterior connection state."

Claim 64 is allowed for the reason the prior art does not teach or suggest, detecting whether or not a signal related to image pickup is inputted from a functionally connected exterior device, said detection step deciding the execution of said operating step according to the result of the detection.

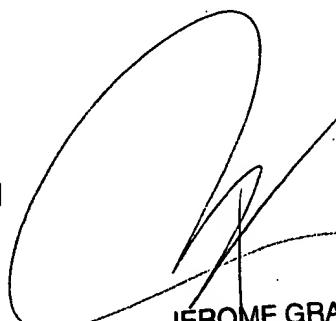
2.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jerome Grant II whose telephone number is 703-305-4391. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. from 9:00 to 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kimberly A. Williams, can be reached on (703) 305-4391. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

J. Grant II



JEROME GRANT II
PRIMARY EXAMINER